



City of La Mesa

RUTH STERLING
Councilmember

September 16, 1999

Mr. Rick Breitenbach
CALFED
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1156
Sacramento, CA 95614

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

As an elected official of the City of La Mesa, the following comments reflect the concerns and needs of my constituents regarding the CALFED process.

The 58,000 citizens of La Mesa need to be reassured that the CALFED process will make good on a promise to find an equitable, balanced solution to problems in the Bay-Delta. To achieve this, CALFED has to be governed by reason and guided by science. Veering from this path to accommodate interests motivated by individuals rather than collective benefits will invalidate the process and leave us no better off than when we started.

We recognize that CALFED is attempting to develop solutions to satisfy multiple interests like environmental restoration, infrastructure improvements, water quality and supply reliability. We believe that the needs of our residents and our businesses can be met in conjunction with the needs of the rest of the State.

The health of the Bay-Delta is so critical to economic vitality, we are looking at a regional investment of what could total \$8 billion by year 2020 to better manage and develop local water resources in Southern California, and the people of La Mesa will be responsible for their share.

Water conservation and recycling programs have been very successful, but we look now to CALFED to provide assurances that supplementary water supplies will be available to offset our new local resources. We don't feel confident that CALFED's current plans go far or fast enough to make measurable improvements in reliability.

Here are some steps that would bring more confidence in the ability of the State project to meet our supply needs:

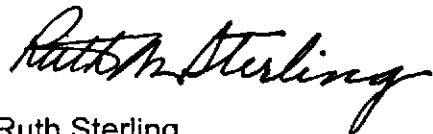
- We need protection from future regulations that could further reduce State water project supplies.
- We need greater operational flexibility in the system to access water in wet years for storage and during times when impact to fisheries are minimal.
- We need new storage facilities and incentives for voluntary water transfers.
- We need a swift decision on an isolated facility.

Not only do we need water to be available, but we need better quality water to be available. Water from the Delta has to have reduced levels of salinity. The accumulations of salts in the Southern California system greatly jeopardizes our ability to implement existing and new local water management programs. High salinity levels also have multi-million dollar impacts on residential and industrial water users.

Great hopes hinge on a successful resolution of problems. Equally great consequences will result if CALFED does not improve water quality and supply reliability for the State's water users.

I appreciate your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ruth M. Sterling".

Ruth Sterling
Councilmember